(iv) selective modernisation programme have been adopted for result-oriented gains; for best utilisation of limited resources;

(v) cost control methods have been introduced for reduction in cost of production at all levels;

(vi) efforts are being made for producing non-operational administrative expenses;

(vii) workers' participation scheme in the management of the mills is being encouraged to achieve higher productivity.

Vacancies of Executive Directors in Banks

364. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the posts of Executive Directors in the various commercial banks are lying vacant, if so, what are the reasons therefor; and what are the names of such banks; and

(b) by when these vacancies are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) Executive Directors have not been appointed in any of the nationalised banks except Canara Bank and United Bank of India. The process of selecting suitable persons for manning these posts is under way.

Opening of new branches of banks in rural areas

365. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given concurrence to the proposal by the Reserve Bank of India to consolidate the existing rural branches of commercial banks rather than opening new branches;

(b) if so, whether Government consider that the existing rural branches of banks are adequate to cater to the needs of all the villages in the country;

(c) if not, what is the target for opening new rural branches by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan period; and

(d) what is the number of rural branches of banks at present and what is the number of villages covered by them to the total number of villages in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (d) The main thrust of the branch licensing policy for the Seventh Five Year Plan period recently finalised by the Reserve Bank of India in consultation with Government aims at achieving 17,000 population per bank office in rural and semi-urban areas of each block and eliminating spatial gaps in the availability of banking facilities. Under this policy, efforts will be made to allow expansion in such a manner that there would be atleast one rural branch within an area of about 200 sq. kms. and that a bank office is normally available within 10 kms. In view of the need oriented approach of the policy, no quantitative target regarding number of bank offices to be opened has been fixed.

Reserve Bank of India has reported that as at the end of March, 85 there were 29,837 rural branches and 9700 semi-urban branches of banks. These branches serve the banking needs of not only the centre where they are located but also of those in the surrounding treas.

Misuse of gratuity fund

366. SHRI RAMANAND YADAV : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that certain managements of private concerns in India are indulging in gross misuse of the gratuity fund: and